
**Report to
The Vermont Legislature**

**Deaths and Hospice Care Report
2019 Report to the Legislature**

In Accordance with 18 V.S.A. § 5208.

**Submitted to: House Committee on Human Services and House Committee on
Health Care
Senate Committee on Health and Welfare**

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Deaths and Hospice Care Report 2019 Report to the Legislature

Legislative Charge

In accordance with 18 V.S.A. § 5208, the Vermont Department of Health prepared this report summarizing the following:

- Number of persons who died during the preceding two calendar years in hospital emergency rooms, other hospital settings, in their own homes, in a nursing home, in a hospice facility, and in any other setting for which information is available;
- Number of decedents that received hospice care within the last 30 days of their life;
- Number of persons who died in hospital intensive care units, assisted living facilities, or residential care homes during the preceding two calendar years.

Place of Death Statistics

This report utilizes information from Vermont death certificates. In the 10-year period of 2009-2018, an average of 5,525 deaths occurred in Vermont each year. For the time period of this report (2017-2018) 11,557 deaths occurred in Vermont, 5,775 in 2017 and 5,782 in 2018. Seventy-two percent of deaths occurred outside of a hospital setting and 28% occurred in a hospital setting.

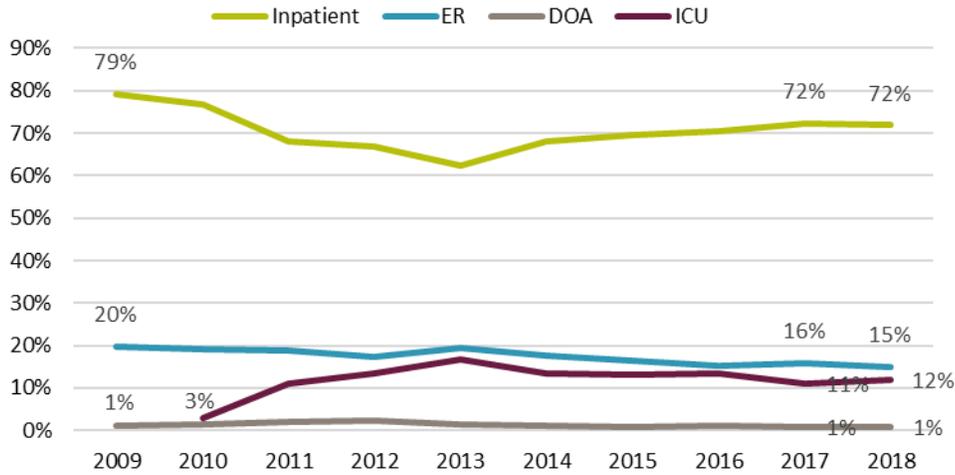
Approximately 1,600 Vermont deaths occur each year in a hospital. In both 2017 and 2018, nearly three-quarters of deaths in the hospital were in the inpatient setting. This translates to more than 1,100 deaths each year (Table 1).

The proportion of in-hospital deaths that occur in the inpatient and emergency room settings have decreased slightly over time, while those in the intensive care units have increased and now make up 12% of in-hospital deaths (Figure 1).

Table 1: Vermont Deaths Occurring in a Hospital Setting

	Inpatient	Emergency Room	Dead on Arrival	Intensive Care	Unknown	Total
2017	1,173	258	13	177	0	1,621
2018	1,148	241	13	193	3	1,598
Total	2,321	499	26	370	3	3,219

Figure 1: Vermont Deaths in a Hospital Setting
by Location
2009-2018



More than 4,000 deaths in Vermont occur outside of the hospital each year, with more than eight in ten of these in either the decedent’s home, a nursing home, or long-term care facility. In both 2017 and 2018, nearly 2,000 deaths occurred in the decedent’s home and an additional 1,600 happened in nursing homes or long-term care facilities (Table 2).

Over time, the proportion of out-of-hospital deaths that occur in the decedent’s home have increased slightly. This change is relatively small overall but has been consistent over the last 10 years. During this same time period, deaths in a nursing home or long-term care facility have decreased. Again, this change is consistent over time. Deaths in a hospice facility remain small in number, 293 in 2018, but now comprise 7% of out-of-hospital deaths compared with 4% in 2009 (Figure 2).

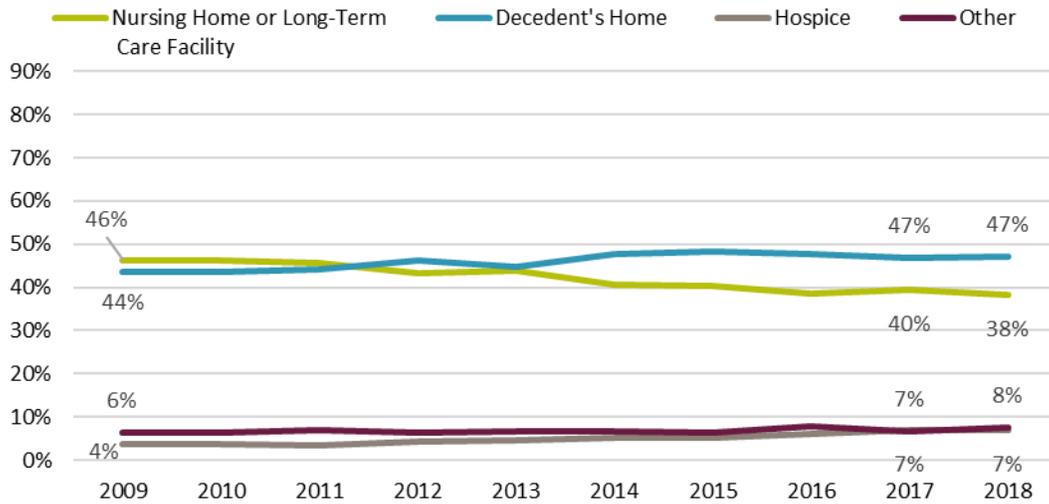
Table 2: Vermont Deaths Occurring Outside of a Hospital

	Decedent’s Home	Nursing home or Long-Term Care Facility ¹	Hospice Facility	Other ²	Unknown	Total
2017	1,945	1,641	295	273	0	4,154
2018	1,972	1,602	293	316	1	4,184
Total	3,917	3,243	588	589	1	8,338

¹Includes nursing homes, assisted living facilities and residential care homes licensed by the State of Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living.

²May include deaths that should have been reported under one of the other categories.

Figure 2: Out of Hospital Deaths
by Location
Vermont Deaths, 2009-2018



Of the deaths that occur in a nursing home or long-term care facility, more occur in nursing homes and fewer happen in assisted living facilities or residential care homes (Table 3).

Table 3: Deaths Occurring in a Nursing Home or Long-Term Care Facility³

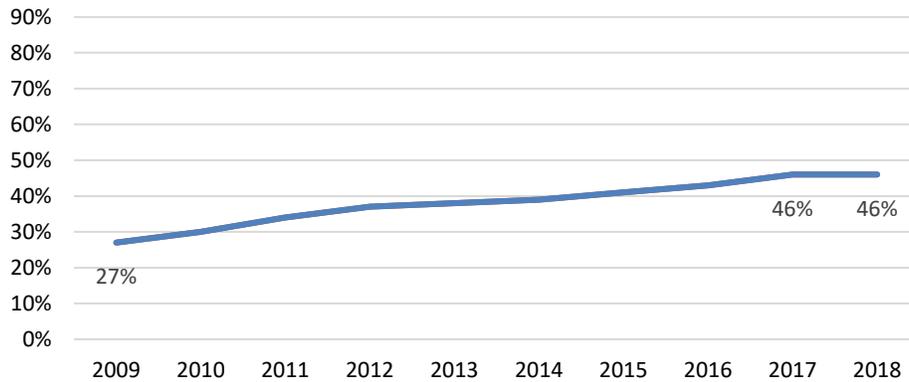
	Nursing Home	Assisted Living Facility	Residential Care Home	Total
2017	1,312	108	221	1,641
2018	1,265	102	235	1,602
Total	2,577	210	456	3,243

³As licensed by the State of Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living.

Hospice Care within 30 Days of Death

In 2017, 2,651 Vermonters received hospice in the 30 days prior to their death. In 2018, 2,647 received hospice care within 30 days of death. The proportion of Vermont deaths receiving hospice care has increased consistently since 2009, when 27% of deaths reported hospice care. In 2017 and 2018, 46% of deaths received hospice care (Figure 3).

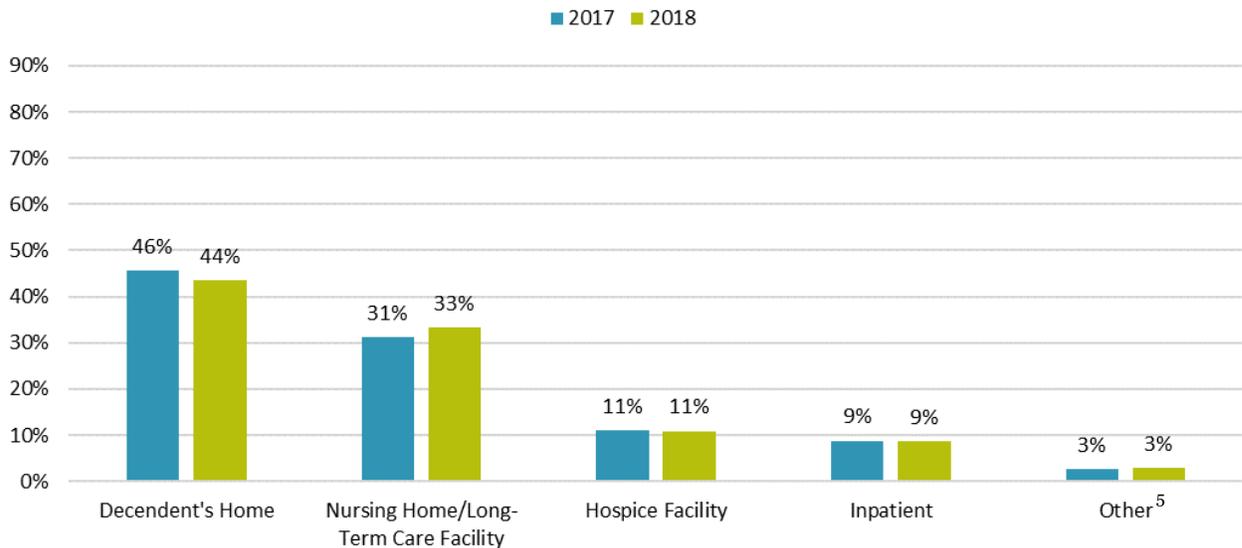
Figure 3: Received Hospice⁴ in 30 Days Prior to Death
Vermont Deaths, 2009-2018



⁴Includes approximately two percent of decedents each year with an unknown hospice status in the 30 days prior to death.

Of Vermont deaths that received hospice care in the past 30 days, three-quarters died either in their home (44% in 2018) or a nursing home or long-term care facility (33%). An additional 11% died in a hospice facility and nine percent died as inpatients in the hospital. Few died in other locations (3%), an intensive care unit (1%), an emergency room (<1%), or were dead on arrival (<1%) (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Place of Death
Vermont Deaths Who Received Hospice Care in Past 30 Days



⁵May include deaths that should have been reported under one of the other categories.

Summary

The percent of Vermont deaths occurring outside of the hospital setting continues to increase. In 2009, 64% of all Vermont deaths occurred outside of the hospital setting compared to 72% in 2018. Deaths occurring in the decedent's home have also increased – now comprising nearly half (47%) of all out-of-hospital deaths in Vermont.

The number of Vermont deaths occurring in hospice continues to increase, from 116 in 2009 to 293 in 2018. Similarly, those receiving hospice care in the 30 days prior to death has increased in the past 10 years – from 27% in 2009 to 46% in 2018. Most of those receiving hospice care in the past 30 days die at their home (44% in 2018) or in a nursing home or long-term care facility (33%). Eleven percent die in a hospice facility.